

Williamstown Council on Aging

Harper Center Bulletin

*Harper Center
Bulletin # 169*

May 1st, 2009

May 2009 Newsletter

OK, May is here and I always felt that May is always one of my absolute favorite months; flowers come back, weather gets warmer, softball starts again and of course, golf balls whizzing thru the afternoon air...what could be better? Alright, good health for all and winning lottery numbers for me. OK now?

And I don't care if the Red Sox took three from the Yankees at Fenway last week, you're still not winning the pennant!

Anyway, I want to thank y'all for being so helpful with our energy conservation efforts during the past few months. We all know what the state of our economy has been and our efforts and your patience and suggestions have worked just fine, we got thru the winter with a little discomfort but here we are in May! All those folks who turned out lights and wore an extra sweater occasionally are to be commended. Thank you so much! Phew! I am so glad that cold stuff is over!!!

Now about the garden business, I will be cleaning it out this week, we'll be planting tomatoes, squash, peppers, maybe some peas along the side—anyone interested in helping with watering and weeding tasks are welcome as usual. Let us know!

Blood Pressure Clinics

Some of y'all got to meet Janet Richardson from Premier Health Care when she came in April to conduct the first clinic with our new clinic providers. For those who don't know the history, the VNA and Hospice of Northern Berkshire managed the BP clinics here for many years but were forced by bad economy issues to withdraw. Premier stepped in and has offered to provide the clinic from now on. We all appreciate that right? Indeed! Anyway, the second visit here by Premier for BP clinic purposes will be Monday, May 11th at 9:30. The time appears to be early enough for most, some says the poll, but not too early. If you haven't met Janet yet, stop by, she'll be happy to see you!

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The Williamstown Council on Aging lives in the Harper Center at 118 Church Street in Williamstown. We're open for business on Monday thru Friday from 8AM to 4Pm and on Sunday at 11 for lunch. You can contact us via telephone at 458-8250, fax to 458-5156 or email bogrady@williamstown.net.

We've been providing quality services, information, referral and advocacy to Williamstown seniors since 1966!

Swine Flu

Swine Flu is a pig based respiratory disease which happens regularly in pig populations. Humans do NOT regularly get swine flu, human cases normally happen to people who are around pigs and once a human is infected, it is possible for the disease to spread from one person to another. That's what is happening out there now in some areas of the country. But , as this is written, not here in Williamstown!

Swine flu causes symptoms very similar to our usual seasonal flu; fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, chills, fever, fatigue, some folks have had diarrhea and vomiting. Swine flu is treatable, people sick with any flu need to drink plenty of fluids, rest, eat healthy foods and wash hands frequently to avoid spreading it. Some antiviral drugs, the kind used to treat seasonal flu, have been used to help in the treatment of swine flu however unlike seasonal flu this particular disease needs to be evaluated and diagnosed by a doctor. If you think you have been exposed to this disease, call your doctor!

How do they diagnose it? Simple enough, your physician will swab the inside of your nose and send the collection off to a laboratory for analysis. If the lab people determine that you do in fact have swine flu your healthcare provider will recommend a course of treatment.

You can protect yourself from swine flu in the same way that you would protect yourself from the regular flu. Avoid kissing, hugging or holding hands with people who have cold or flu symptoms. Wash your hands often with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer. If you sneeze or cough, cover up, then wash! Drink plenty of fluids always anyway...

There is no vaccine for swine flu, and, again, there is **NOT AN OUTBREAK IN OUR AREA**. As usual, if you do contract a flu, after you contact your doctor, **STAY HOME!** We don't want it in here or spreading out there in the community!

If you want more information on any type of flu, ask your doctors office, or check with Northern Berkshire Health Systems, www.nbhealth.org, they're your local resources and they can let you know what's up out here in the New England woods.



Pot Lucks



OK, we can do it and we're going to have our first pot luck event in June. Essentially, we'll be asking several folks who have expressed a desire to cook and bring prepared food from home to go ahead and do it. We don't know what they'll be bringing yet, but I'm sure it will be good. Me too, though I can't tell you what yet, some kind of lasagna I think. The volunteer cooks will be planning the meal soon and then we'll let you know what it is. If you're not on the list, please don't bring anything in yourself, we're trying to keep it organized the first time around and actually create a cohesive menu. What happens in the future may be a little different depending on size of the event but for now, we're keeping it simple. Stay tuned.

Walk to win

And this time, we're going to win. There are no alternatives.

Many of you will remember the annual walking programs we Harper Folks participated in regularly. Walk With Me in the Berkshires and the REACH Great Spring Tune Up were regular events here in the month of May annually until a couple years ago but now they're back.!



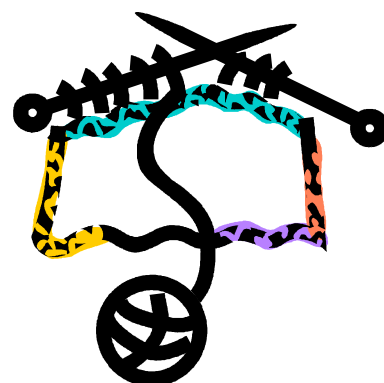
OK, different format. Sharon Leary from the REACH program at NARH and I have been working on this idea for a couple months and REACH has agreed to sponsor a small North Berkshire event featuring us against the local "other" senior centers. It will be the same format, our designated team will get pedometers and count steps. Winner takes the prize. Whatever that means.

Anyway, if Kim or I ask you to join us, it will be because we know that you're a walker and want you to join our championship march. I can tell you that it will run for four weeks from mid May to mid June, days and details will follow soon!

Temari

Ruth Fresia and Louise Thompson offered a successful and popular Temari class here a couple of months ago. Temari is an ancient Japanese craft featuring wonderfully colored, decorated stitched balls. The Temari themselves were originally intended to be children's toys but because they are in some cases beautiful, they came into demand as collectible objects. As a matter of fact, there were recent exhibits of Temari at the North Adams Public Library and the Milne here in Williamstown last winter. That's where a lot of us became familiar with the concept.

I digress. This class will be offered on Wednesday afternoons in the back craft room from 12:30 to 2:20 starting from May 6th and running thru about June 3rd. You're welcome to call us here for information.



May 5th

May fifth in Mexico is Cinco de Mayo, the Mexican equivalent of the Fourth of July. It's their Independence Day, or so I've been told. My formal plans for May 5th have fallen thru and been postponed until next month but that's OK. Tuesday we'll have a pasta, meatballs, garlic bread and salad luncheon, just because. Call it Cinco de Mayo if you'd like, any excuse to throw a party, right?

The Red Hats are going out for their monthly luncheon on May 19. Later on that afternoon we'll be showing our monthly movie, can't tell you what it is yet, we'll announce it next week. There is apparently interest in a specific film so we'll be showing that one with popcorn and goodies.

Kathy wants to schedule a trip to Pedrins for lunch in the near future. Watch for details!

Williamstown Council on Aging

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We're on the web!
www.williamstown.net

Just another note about our daily telephone reassurance program. Every morning, all 365 days in every year since 2001, a volunteer or staff member here at the Harper Center calls or receives a brief telephone call from seniors participating in our phone reassurance program. This simple call functions as a lifeline for participants as every day they speak to someone who knows that they've gotten up and are OK. They've given us the names of individuals who will check on them if they forget to call and we can't find'em, they know that we're looking out for them every day. In the eight years we've managed this program, we've actually rescued nine separate individuals who had fallen, were injured and couldn't get up.

We wonder what would have happened to them if we hadn't been around and how many other tragedies might have been avoided if someone had been involved with our program.

It's free, it only takes a minute of your time daily and it **WORKS!**

Got questions?

Call us, we'll be glad to talk with you about the Williamstown Council on Aging Telephone Reassurance Program.

Other news and notes

Kip Moeller, our footcare nurse will do the monthly clinic on Tuesday the 12th this month. That would be one week earlier than usual, just in case you were wondering.

SHINE Counselor Peggy Jenks will be here on May 20th at 11:30 to assist anyone with questions regarding health care insurance issues. She's also available anytime for personal consultations thru the office here at the Harper Center. You call us and we'll set it up for you!

Our friends at Williamstown Commons are hosting a spaghetti supper, sponsored by the Williamstown Rotary Club on the 14th from 5PM to 7PM, tickets are \$6.00 for seniors. The proceeds will benefit Rotary scholarship and community programs.

The Garden Club of Williamstown will be meeting at Harper on Monday May 4th at 1:00. All are welcome to attend, join the club or simply watch the presentation. Oh—and they'll be offering a flower arrangement program in June, stay tuned!

Finally, I just got a call from my good friend Sandy Lamb, Director of the North Adams Council on Aging, who told me that their walking club will kick our walkers butts in this competition. Are you hearing this?



Here comes picnic season!